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Professor David Bankier dies at 63

By HAVIV RETTIG
GUR
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Scholar was head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research.

Prof. David Bankier, the respected head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Studies and a noted scholar on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, passed away over the weekend from cancer at the age of 63.

"Prof. Bankier was among the leading scholars of his generation in the study of the Shoah, and published over 120 books, articles, book chapters and reviews," read a short notice about his death written by Jewish American historian Prof. Jonathan Sarna on the on-line discussion group H-Judaic.

The German-born Bankier focused his research on German society in the period before and during the Holocaust, touching on questions of how anti-Semitism became a widespread ideology that sustained the regime and mobilized mass sentiment.

"Professor Bankier was one of the most important and most cited scholars in the research of Nazi Germany. His publications in this field constitute a cornerstone of modern academic research," Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev said in a statement Saturday.

"Professor Bankier was a researcher of the highest caliber, a gifted lecturer, and a human being of outstanding integrity, brilliance and humility. We have lost one of the world's most important scholars in the field of German society and Nazi anti-Semitism," Shalev continued.

Bankier was educated at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he earned his doctorate and served as the Solomon and Victoria Cohen Professor and head of anti-Semitism studies at the university's Institute for Contemporary Jewry.

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